574 643 came. One of these two officials usually came to greet them. He then informed the Paramount that strangers were present and took back the Paramount's greeting to them and asked their business. This was in turn reported to the Paramount, who arranged for their business to be taken care of and, if they were important people, sent an invitation for them to come to the *bwalo*, to which they were escorted by one of his officials and given seats. In due time the Paramount came out of his house and they gave him the *Bayete* and then he greeted them. As a rule he carried on all conversation through his *mlomo wenkosi*, and, after staying for a short time, often went back into the house and left his officials to entertain the guests. If the guests were visiting chiefs and *alumuzana*, word had gone round when they first arrived, and the senior men of the village, the *madoda*, gathered to greet them, and sat in a group as they did for court cases. Such conversations of a social nature took place as a rule in the courtyard where chairs and mats were placed. If it rained or was very hot they went onto the verandah which ran the whole length of the house. Never, so far as I could discover, did visitors come into the house unless they were close relatives of the Paramount or his wife.

Women visitors who came with the men or by themselves went through the same procedure of announcing themselves and stating their business. Then, if they were important people, they were escorted to the courtyard at the back of the big house where they were greeted by the Paramount's wife and by her daughter, who then settled down to talk with them, either out of doors or on the back verandah, according to the weather. It was usual for the Paramount's wife and daughter also to go and greet the men visitors on the front verandah or in the courtyard. 26 574 643 They did not stay, however, and if the visitors had come from far the Paramount told his wife, after she had greeted them, to 'catch a fowl'. When she returned to the back courtyard, children chased hens and there was squawking and yelling until the right number had been caught and killed. Pounding of maize began, the fowls were dressed and put in pots on the fire and other 'relish' was prepared of vegetables and groundnuts, and the flour was cooked to make porridge (*nsima*). The Paramount's wife and her helpers prepared the best pot-roast of chicken I have ever had. Food thus prepared was served to the guests on the front verandah in the traditional style, the porridge in food baskets (*nsengwa*), the chicken and other relish in small covered pots. The Paramount offered the food to his guests and then withdrew into the house. When they received the food, as well as when they had finished eating, they [576] thanked him with the traditional *Bayete nkosi*, adding, if they were of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans, some of the praise names or *izitokozo* of the Maseko Paramounts. To European visitors, and occasionally to Christian Africans, tea was offered with milk and sugar.

574 643 Viewed from the back *bwalo*, where I lived and watched all this happening and listened to comments, it was evident that the never-ending